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THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Peru: social disaster follows earthquake

BY RÓGER CALERO

August 21—Hundreds of thousands of working people are affected by the social disaster triggered by an earthquake that struck Peru's southern desert region August 15.

The death toll in the earthquake, which registered 8.0 on the Richter scale, has risen to more than 540, with thousands injured.

The overwhelming majority were killed as homes and buildings made with adobe bricks collapsed.

The center of the destruction was in the city of Ica and the nearby port of Pisco, about 125 miles southeast of the capital, Lima. The quake knocked down electrical power lines and cut off telephone and mobile phone communication for much of the region. The main highways from Lima also suffered major damage.

In the provincial capital Ica, one quarter of the buildings collapsed. There are major concerns about the spread of disease. Thousands are sleeping out in the open in the winter cold, with no access to drinkable water, food, or medi-

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L.A. actions protest deportation of Arellano

BY CHRIS REMPLE

LOS ANGELES, August 20—About 150 people rallied here tonight in front of the offices of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to protest the arrest and deportation of Elvira Arellano. The news conference and rally were called by the Coalition for Humane Immigration Reform of Los Angeles (CHIRLA).

Arellano, 32, is a former airline cleaner at O'Hare airport in Chicago. She was arrested and ordered deported following a workplace raid in 2002. For the last year she has been in sanctuary at Adalberto United Methodist church in Chicago. Fifteen ICE agents surrounded the car she was riding in August 19 and arrested her outside the La Placita church in Los Angeles. She was deported to Tijuana, Mexico, eight hours later.

Arellano came to Los Angeles to speak at four churches on the fight for legalization and against the separation of immigrant families. Her plan was to go from here to Washington, D.C., to join in a demonstration in front of Congress

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Utah coal miners: 'We want to mine 100 percent safely'

Workers respond to coal bosses' unsafe productivity drive

BY ALYSON KENNEDY AND CHRIS HOEPPNER

HUNTINGTON, Utah, August 22—"I want to mine 100 percent safely. Anything less is not enough," said Mack Isaacson, a roof bolter at the Horizon Mine near here, speaking today to the *Militant* in the aftermath of the Crandall Canyon mine disasters.

See editorial on page 4

Isaacson and other miners at Horizon are insisting that the owners correct unsafe working conditions. "I don't want to end up dead at the bottom of this mine. I have two children and my wife is pregnant," he said. Other miners in the area have also told the *Militant* about unsafe conditions where they work and efforts to change them.

"Yesterday our crew organized a meeting with the foremen and the son of the owner to press our concerns," said Isaacson. "Parts of the mine roof are deteriorating. There's not enough timber to shore it up, and the roof bolts are inadequate. Some of the plates that are tightened up to the roof by the bolts look like they come out of a junkyard. And the company is about to start pillaring today!"

Pillar extraction, or retreat mining, is a dangerous method of mining that was in use at the Crandall Canyon mine.

"After about an hour of our crew pressing these safety questions," Isaacson reported, "the company said they would be willing to correct these problems and 'put it in writing'—if we 'produce 30,000 tons of coal.'

"We'll see what they do. But we need union representation. After the Sago mine disaster [in West Virginia last year], there was a big investigation and promises of improvement, but all we have is more dead miners."

Isaacson added, "I hope that by my explaining what is happening at the mine where I work, others will speak out about what is happening in their workplaces. The bosses try to burn in our minds the fear that we will lose our jobs, but we have to stand up for our rights to have peace of mind."

March by miners' families

Here in Huntington, 75 family members and friends of six trapped miners marched and held a press conference August 19 to express their outrage at how company and federal safety officials have conducted rescue efforts at the nearby Crandall Canyon mine.

"We left behind the company officials, people from MSHA [the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration],

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AP/Jae C. Hong

Family members of six trapped miners march August 19 in Huntington, Utah. They protested how company and safety officials have handled rescue operations at Crandall Canyon mine.

Unsafe conditions are prevalent in Utah mines

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

PRICE, Utah—In face of the disaster at the Crandall Canyon mine, many coal miners and other working people have pointed out that unsafe conditions are widespread in the mines in this state. And the facts prove their concerns.

A feature article in the August 19 *Deseret Morning News* reports that coal bosses in Utah "consistently and repeatedly break the most essential of safety rules."

The article notes that federal inspectors cited more than 5,000 safety violations in Utah coal mines since 2004. More than 1,800 were considered "significant and substantial" threats to health and life. Half of these were for "accumulation of combustible materials," mainly coal dust that could cause fires or explosions.

The Crandall Canyon mine, now the focus of public outrage over mine collapses that have trapped six miners and killed three rescue workers, has had 116 "significant and substantial" violations during this period.

But seven other mines in the state were issued an even higher number of "significant and substantial" citations. At the top of the list is the Aberdeen

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Miner: 'I have to get that paper'

BY MAGGIE TROWE

PRICE, Utah—"I hope everyone buys that paper. We need unions," a miner's daughter said as she bought a copy of the *Militant* at an August 19 outdoor vigil and fund-raiser in Huntington for the families of the six miners trapped in the Crandall Canyon mine.

The mood at the gathering, where relatives of the miners addressed several hundred people, was one of anger at the mine owners and the federal mine safety agency.

Over the past two weeks supporters of the *Militant* have fanned out through the coal-mining communities of Price, Huntington, Orangeville, Helper, Wellington, East Carbon, Carbonville, and Sunnyside to join in the discussions taking place among miners and other working people.

A miner coming off shift at the unionized Consol mine near Emery said, "You've got it right there!" when he saw the *Militant* headline, "Safety is a union question! No miner has to die!"

Going door to door in East Carbon, 20 miles east of here, a team got a good response to the *Militant's* accurate reporting and working-class viewpoint. "Many of the people we met were miners, retired miners, and their wives," reported team captain Frank Forrestal.

"The idea of fighting for safety in the mines struck a chord with them," Forrestal said. Some had worked at the now-closed Kaiser mine in nearby Sunnyside, while others work at the West Ridge mine, one of three owned by Murray Energy Corp.

In a small trailer park in Wellington, we sat in the shade with miners and their wives. A worker who had been employed at one Murray mines and is now a coal hauler told us of his experience trying to organize fellow farm workers in the San Joaquin Valley when he lived

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Federal court hears Cuban Five appeal



Militant/Bill Arth

Attorney Leonard Weinglass speaks at August 19 reception in Atlanta for supporters of the campaign to free framed-up Cuban revolutionaries held in U.S. prisons.

BY SAM MANUEL

ATLANTA—On August 20 a panel of the U.S. 11th Circuit Court heard the latest appeal of five Cuban revolutionaries being held in U.S. jails.

The defense argued that the convictions of the Cuban Five should be set aside because of misconduct by the trial prosecutor, and insufficient evidence presented by the government for its charges of "conspiracy" and "conspiracy to commit murder."

"This hearing was one more step in the long appeal process of these five men," said Leonard Weinglass one of their defense attorneys.

More than 100 supporters of freedom for the five political prisoners attended the hearing. Among those attending were Dagoberto Rodríguez, head of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., and Roberto González, brother of René González, one of the jailed Cubans. Prominent jurists from the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain, Canada, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, and Puerto Rico also attended.

"We are optimistic about the hearing, because more people are learning the truth about the case," said Roberto González. He pointed to prominent articles that appeared in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* on the case the previous day and on the day of the appeal.

Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, René González, Antonio Guerrero, and Ramón Labañino were convicted in a frame-up trial in 2001 on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage, of being unregistered foreign agents, and—in the case of Hernández—conspiracy to commit murder. Guerrero and Labañino were given life sentences, and René González and Fernando González were sentenced to 15 and 19 years, respectively. Hernández received a double life sentence.

The five were in the United States on a mission from the Cuban government to monitor the activities of Cuban-American counterrevolutionary organizations based in Miami that have a history of carrying out violent attacks against Cuba with the complicity of the U.S. government.

YS joins Minnesota meat packers' fight to defend union

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

BY LORETTA VANPELT

MINNESOTA, August 11—Young Socialists here are joining in the struggle by workers at Dakota Premium Foods to keep their union.

The more than 200 workers at the slaughterhouse, represented by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, won the union in 2000 after a seven-hour sit-down strike. Now, right as their first contract expires, bosses at the plant have begun a campaign to decertify the union.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

To draw into this struggle those workers who were hired in the past several years and do not know what conditions were like before the union, Local 789 members have participated in various house meetings, discussing out the questions as to why the union is necessary. They are also producing and circulating a pro-union newsletter entitled *The Workers' Voice*. Young Socialists have been part of these efforts.

"This fight to maintain the union at Dakota has high stakes for meat packers and for the labor movement in the entire Midwest," said Julian Santana, a Young Socialist who works at the plant. "If the company breaks the union, other meatpacking companies in the area will be emboldened to do the same."

In addition, members of the YS along with other young people and members of the Socialist Workers Party have been using the *Militant* to get the word out in the Twin Cities and in the region. More than 170 copies of the socialist paper have been sold at plant gates, on college campuses, and door to door in neighborhoods where many Dakota workers live.

The response has been positive, with many workers and young people supporting the union fight.

Robert Silver, 21, a carpet cleaning worker, helped distribute more than 25 copies of the *Militant* this Saturday afternoon. Referring to company efforts to confuse workers into accepting the decertification of the union, he said, "In this fight, you've got to support the workers and distrust the bosses."

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

‘I have to get that paper’

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in California.

At the post office in Price, *Militant* supporters have set up tables on several occasions. We encountered differing reactions. “Now is not the time for that,” one woman told us the day after three rescue crew workers were killed at the Crandall Canyon mine. On the other hand, many people expressed anger and frustration at the deaths and welcomed the *Militant*.

In a Huntington trailer park Vanessa Justesen, 29, who is married to a miner who left a Murray mine, said, “I feel a lot safer sending my husband out the door now that he works in a union mine.”

One team went door to door with the *Militant* in Hyrum, Utah, in a working-class, mostly Latino neighborhood near the Swift meatpacking plant where immigration police have carried out two raids since last December.

The team talked to a garment worker, a construction worker, and several families with relatives who work at Swift plant. Discussions ranged from the fight for safety in the mines to how to defend immigrant workers from raids and deportations.

So far supporters of the paper have sold 100 subscriptions in the Price-Huntington area. Another 10 subscriptions have been sold in other mining areas as teams here spread out. In all, 350 copies of the *Militant* have been sold.

BY VED DOOKHUN

ROCK SPRINGS, Wyoming—Our *Militant* team visited this community, where Bridger Coal operates an underground and surface coal mine, which fuel the neighboring power plant. Many miners from Utah who quit the mines when Murray took ownership now work here.

Workers in the area bought 70 copies of the paper and seven subscriptions.


Militant/Maggie Trowe

Militant **supporter discusses unions and fight for mine safety with retired miner**

After a discussion about mine safety and the need for unions at a local bar, the bartender took a stack of special *Militant* supplements to distribute to patrons.

We sold the *Militant* at the entrance to the mine and power plant. At the evening shift change, cars started pulling up in a driveway and a number of miners and power plant workers came out to talk to us.

One worker asked, “Where is that paper? I heard a lot about it.” Another said, “We’re going to put it up in the dinner hole and make sure the word gets out.”

BY RYAN SCOTT

PITTSBURGH—A two-day *Militant* team in the northern Appalachia area sold 11 subscriptions, 118 copies of the socialist paper, 120 supplements, and dozens of back issues, receiving a $20 donation. We sold at seven mines in the area at shift change, including Powhatan No. 6, a Murray-owned mine. Dozens of workers bought the *Militant* outside shopping stores in the area. A number of mines in this area are UMWA-organized.

Many miners waved and gave us thumbs-up, when they saw our signs, “Read the *Militant*, get the truth about Utah mine disasters,” and “Oppose attacks on immigrant workers.” A truck driver told us, “I used to work for Murray; he screwed us at North American, at Maple Creek, at Century, at Powhatan. We know him here.”

As West Virginia University opened its fall session, the team sold 9 subs and 50 copies of the *Militant*. Twenty students signed up for more information on the Young Socialists. YS member Ben Joyce said, “Many students were incredibly receptive to the need to organize and use unions to prevent mine disasters like the one in Utah.” The school newspaper interviewed Joyce about the Young Socialists and the *Militant*.

Social disaster in Peru follows earthquake

Continued from front page
cine. Hospitals that did not collapsed are overwhelmed.

“We don’t have lights, water, communications. Most houses have fallen,” said Pisco mayor Juan Mendoza. Eighty-five percent of Pisco’s downtown is rubble, according to Brig. Maj. Jorge Vera, head of the rescue operation there.

At least 80,000 people have lost their homes. The disruption of water supplies is also threatening livestock and agriculture.

The country’s lack of infrastructure—the result of decades of imperialist domination—and inadequate government response following the quake have magnified the human toll and scope of the social disaster.

Aid did not begin to arrive to the main disaster zone until about 36 hours after the earthquake, reported Associated Press. In rural areas surrounding Ica and Pisco, survivors have not yet received much help, and have largely depended on themselves to survive.

“The supply trucks go by and the anguish of watching them pass without giving us anything forces us to stop them and take what we need,” said Reyna Macedo, a 60-year-old mother of seven from Pisco. Some have taken to the streets to protest the food and water shortages.

President Alan García sent 1,000 extra troops to the region August 19 to prevent looting and “establish order” by “whatever it takes,” reported BBC News.

“I understand your desperation, your anxiety,” said García during a visit to the area two days before. “There is no reason to fall into exaggerated desperation.”

While donations have began to arrive from relief agencies and governments from different countries, totaling $40 million so far according to the August 19 *Washington Post,* emergency supplies have only reach a small percentage of the affected population. The Cuban government flew in two mobile hospitals with a medical team of 42 people.

The U.S. government donated a meager $150,000 for emergency supplies, along with two mobile clinics and two helicopters to help in the rescue effort. The U.S. Navy hospital ship *Comfort*, now docked in Ecuador, wasn’t sent to Pisco “because both governments decided it wasn’t needed,” reported the *Washington Post*. The *Comfort* carries 800 medical personnel, “but Peru needs supplies more than doctors,” said U.S. embassy spokesperson Dan Martinez.

Mine safety

Continued from front page
(Tower) mine, another facility controlled by Robert Murray, with 785 violations, about half of them “significant and substantial.” Since 2004, it received four “imminent danger withdrawal orders,” leading to parts of the mine being closed down.

Federal inspectors also cited Utah coal mines on 156 occasions for “serious negligence.” The Aberdeen mine was again at the top with 42 violations.

“Most violations are repeated not just once but up to dozens of times,” the *Deseret Morning News* article noted. For example, the Horizon mine was cited 40 times since 2004 for violating approved ventilation plans to control coal dust and methane gas.

This is not surprising when the average fine levied for violations is merely $311.

LETTERS

Unions and mine safety I

I am a 24-year aircraft mechanic and former Teamster with 15 years with UPS Airlines. And I submit that the history and/or culture of the management of certain industries are the reason why there must be unions, those being mining, railroads, all things UPS, steel production and so many others. However, after moving to Utah a year ago from California, I submit that if there was ever a state that helped employers resist union organizing it is Utah.

If you listen closely to Mr. [Robert] Murray’s comments, especially the first days, you’ll hear the words of someone who’s lived in his own world for quite a while and is used to having everything his way, going as far as telling the press what to print and prohibiting the families from talking to them. If at the end of the day some good comes out of exposing Crandall and all the other mine operations for what they’ve been getting away with for so long, we’ll all be better off for it.

Richard Wening
Newcastle, Utah

Unions and mine safety II

A temporary worker works with me at a steel mill in Washington, Pennsylvania that’s organized by the Steelworkers Local 7139-05. He has worked as a long hole driller in many states at underground and surface mines. In August 2006, this worker met Murray at one of his safety meetings, while working at the Galatia mine in Galatia, Illinois. This safety meeting, the worker said, felt more to him like a production meeting. For example, each shift was compared to the shift before, production-wise. He said he saw many unsafe practices in this mine. Earlier in 2006, this worker was a long hole driller at the Dugout Canyon mine in Utah.

My coworker said that when he first heard that Murray was saying an earthquake caused the entrapment, his first reaction was that this was a lie.

This worker said that he always saw how the union mines are the safest. It is easier for the coal companies to pay the fines, he said, than to repair safety violations. He said that MSHA is a government operation, and he thinks that Bush gives MSHA too much leeway. He feels that the fines are way too cheap, and need to be much higher.

He ended our conversation by saying he was glad to hear that someone was doing something around here to get the word out about the miners in Huntington. He volunteered to order his own bundle of *Militants* to get to coal miners he knows in the area from his drilling time at the mines in this region.

Josefina Otero
Washington, Pennsylvania

Want to write miners’ families

We live in Bass Lake, Indiana. Not a day has gone by that we have not offered prayers for the missing miners and the people waiting for the rescue. We have been deeply affected by this sad incident.

I would like to write a letter to Bob Murray, the owner of the mine. And, I would like to send a letter to the families and friends of the people waiting. Would you be so kind as to send me an address to enable me to send cards of hope and faith.

Bea Zahn
Bass Lake, Indiana

[Editor’s note: You can contact the United Mine Workers union in the area at UMWA District 22, 525 East 100 South, Price, UT 84501; tel.: (435) 637-2037, to find how to send correspondence to the miners’ families.]

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

EDITORIAL

Only effective way to enforce safety: organize unions

Unsafe working conditions are widespread in coal mines throughout Utah, not just in the Crandall Canyon mine, where six miners have been trapped and three rescue workers killed in two mine collapses this month.

This fact, which miners have long pointed out, was confirmed once again in recent articles in the *Deseret Morning News* and other papers. Federal inspectors have cited owners of coal mines across the state for more than 5,000 safety violations since 2004.

When workers demand safe job conditions, however, bosses demand more production, subordinating safety to profits. They push to get miners to work faster, longer hours, under more hazardous conditions—such as the dangerous retreat mining methods used at the Crandall Canyon mine.

This is what is happening, for example, at the nonunion Horizon mine near Helper, Utah, where miners report the company is starting retreat mining. When miners met with bosses there about fixing deteriorating roof conditions, inadequate bolts, and other problems before they start extracting coal pillars, the company's response was, "Produce 30,000 tons of coal!"

In the days before the second collapse at Crandall Canyon, 12 miners on the rescue operation asked to be reassigned to other work because of concern about the dangerous conditions under which it was being carried out. The action by these miners was an early-warning sign that the bosses failed to act on.

These two examples show that workers are the ones who are concerned about safety and who take initiatives to protect life and limb, despite pressure from employers not to speak out on hazards. The bosses' profit drive is responsible for the routine neglect of job safety. And workers cannot depend on the federal mine safety agency.

There is only one effective way for miners to fight for improved conditions on the job: to organize a union and use their collective power to enforce safety. As Mack Isaacson, a roof bolter at the Horizon mine, told the *Militant*, "After the Sago mine disaster [in West Virginia last year] there was a big investigation and promises of improvement, but all we have is more dead miners."

"We need union representation," Isaacson said. "I hope that by my explaining what is happening at the mine where I work, others will speak out about what is happening in their workplaces. The bosses try to burn in our minds the fear that we will lose our jobs, but we have to stand up for our rights to have peace of mind."

That is exactly right. And these points are part of the growing discussion among working people today, in face of the Utah mine disaster, about how to ensure job safety and about the need to organize the United Mine Workers at every mine.

That is why supporters of the *Militant* are getting this paper into the hands of fellow working people as widely as possible. Reports have come in that the paper's headlines on "Safety is a union question! No miner has to die" and "Organize the mines" have struck a chord among many. We urge you to join in this effort— help get out the facts and a working-class perspective.

Utah miners: 'We want to mine 100 percent safely'

Continued from front page

[and] the Red Cross, and we marched across the street to talk to the press to explain our disagreement with the company over the rescue. All six families and their close friends marched," said Rosa Cholico, a friend of one of the families. They walked over from the site where Murray Energy officials hold daily briefings for relatives of the miners.

This was the first time the families issued a statement since the August 6 collapse of the Crandall Canyon mine that left Brandon Phillips, Carlos Payán, Don Erickson, Kerry Allred, Luis Hernández, and Manuel Sánchez trapped.

Many workers and safety officials say a "bounce"—a movement of rock and coal underground produced by intense pressure from the weight of the mountain and the mining of the coal seam—caused a blast of coal in the mine, large sections of which collapsed.

A week into the rescue operation, 12 miners on the rescue crews, concerned about the dangerous conditions, asked the company to reassign them to work in other areas of the mine, according to numerous press reports. On August 15 another "bounce" caused an outburst of coal, which covered up the machine being used to mine the rock and debris.

The next day there was another bounce. It blew out a 60-foot section of coal, burying rescue workers. Three men were killed: Dale Black and Brandon Kimber, both Murray Energy mine foremen, and Gary Jensen, an MSHA inspector. Officials halted the rescue effort.

Anger grows

Arvid and Betty Hathaway from nearby Price told the *Militant* they were angry about the rescue workers being killed at Crandall Canyon, a nonunion mine. "We need to bring back the unions to the mines," said Arvid Hathaway, a retired miner. His wife Betty added, "What we need is a march to protest the situation."

At the August 19 press conference following their march, the family members of the trapped miners issued a statement. "We feel that MSHA, Utah American Energy, Murray Energy and the IPA have failed the six trapped miners. They've failed us and our community," they said. The statement was read by Sonny Olsen, a local attorney and spokesman for the families.

UtahAmerican Energy is a co-owner of the mine and the Intermountain Power Agency operates a power plant fed by the Crandall Canyon mine.

The statement said the families have been demanding from "day one" that a large hole be drilled to lower a rescue capsule into the mine, but that this has not been done. It noted that a capsule was used successfully in the rescue of nine trapped miners in Quecreek, Pennsylvania, in 2002.

"The officials seem to be utilizing methods that the family deems will expose further rescue teams to unnecessary risks," the statement said.

The families were responding to Murray Energy vice president Rob Moore's statement to the press that "It's likely these miners may not be found." Asked if he meant that they would not be found alive or if their bodies would not be found, Moore replied, "It's possible they may not be found."

He also "said there is recoverable coal in other parts of the 5,000-acre mine, and the company expected to resume operations at some point," the Associated Press reported.

Company president Robert Murray said August 20 that a fifth bore hole was being drilled and a camera and listening device would be lowered into the mine. But, he added, "drilling a 30-inch hole would not be justified unless we found someone alive."

UMWA offers to help

United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) mine rescue teams from the Consol and Deer Creek mines who volunteered to help with the rescue immediately after the six miners were trapped were turned away, UMWA officials have told the media.

Mike Dalpiaz, UMWA international representative from Price, said the families requested union assistance and the UMWA has offered to help. He said that under federal law, nonunion miners can request the UMWA to represent them in the post-accident investigation.

The UMWA is calling on Congress to organize an independent investigation of the Crandall Canyon disaster.

Murray repeated at the August 20 press conference his assertion that an earthquake caused the mine collapse. He has also denied that "retreat" mining was being done at the mine. In retreat mining, coal pillars supporting the roof are mined as the crew withdraws, leaving the roof to collapse.

On August 17, UMWA health and safety director Dennis O'Dell told CNN's Anderson Cooper, "We know that, in this area, mountain bumps [bounces] do occur. We also know that, if you retreat mine in the fashion that they did, you're going to escalate the consequences of what is occurring at this point."

Christina Anderson, a retired UMWA miner who used to work at the nearby Dear Creek mine, said, "In eight years I felt three small bounces. At Crandall Canyon, there have bumps in two weeks strong enough to register on a seismic scale."

Anderson added, "Pulling pillars at Crandall Canyon is unsafe. But that is the plan that was submitted and ap-

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'Militant' has long history in mine struggles in West

BY NAOMI CRAINE

An August 18 article titled "Outspoken mine owner bows out of spotlight" in the Utah daily *Deseret Morning News* noted the lower profile that the owner of the Crandall Canyon mine, Robert Murray, was keeping since the August 16 death of three rescue workers.

The online edition of the article said, at the end, "In the mining communities of Huntington and Price, sentiment against Murray seemed to be growing."

It continued, "The writers and editors of 'The Militant,' a paper that describes itself as 'a socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people,' was handing out copies of their latest edition Friday with the message: 'No miner has to die!'"

The article reported that an editorial in an August special *Militant* supplement stated, "The truth must be told about the unsafe conditions facing miners at Crandall Canyon," and "Responsibility for these men's lives lies with the bosses." The Utah daily added, "The paper blames Murray and his company" for the mine disaster.

The *Militant*'s coverage and efforts by the paper's readers to get it into the hands of fellow working people is part of a long history of reporting on struggles of miners and other workers in the West, including the question of safety in the mines. Many workers in the area have bought, read, and circulated the paper over the years, and are doing so again today.

The socialist newsweekly featured prominent coverage of and editorial support for the 2003–2006 effort by miners to unionize the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah. That struggle began with a 10-month strike by about 75 miners, most of them Mexican-born. Failing to defeat the workers on the picket line, and facing the prospect of a union representation vote, C.W. Mining Co., which owns Co-Op, filed a lawsuit in September 2004 against the United Mine Workers of America, 16 individual miners, the *Militant*, and many others who had supported or reported on the unionization drive. The harassment suit accused the nearly 100 defendants of "defamation" and other charges.

The miners and their supporters continued to tell the truth about their struggle and beat back the bosses' legal attack. Backers of the *Militant* launched the Militant Fighting Fund to defend the paper from the retaliatory lawsuit.

In May of last year, federal district judge Dee Benson threw out the charges against most of the defendants, including the *Salt Lake Tribune* and the *Deseret Morning News.* Two months later, the judge dismissed the remaining charges, including those against the UMWA and the *Militant*, "with prejudice and on the merits," meaning the charges could not be refiled. The entire record of the Militant Fighting Fund can be found at the homepage of the paper's website, www.themilitant.com.

China: 181 trapped in flooded coal mine

BY DOUG NELSON

Flooding has left 181 miners trapped underground at two mines outside the city of Xintai in eastern China. The disaster took place August 17 after a levee broke following heavy rains. About 670 workers escaped.

Of the 181 trapped miners, 172 work at the larger Huayuan mine. Miners there told the press that flooding has been a problem for several years.

“The workers from the day shift, most of whom managed to escape later, reported the rising water levels and submerged work areas to the management, but the company did nothing,” said Mr. Cao, brother-in-law of one of the trapped miners, according to the English-language *China Daily*.

Huayuan Mining Co. reportedly ignored several flood warnings from local safety officials earlier that day.

The mine was sold off by the state to private owners, and in 2003 the new bosses laid off nearly half the workforce, canceling their pensions and disability benefits.

Angry relatives of missing workers say Huayuan Mining has been silent and has not even provided a list of miners believed to be trapped underground.

About 200 family members brought down a fence and scuffled with security forces August 19 outside the mine, amid rumors that rescue operations had been abandoned, the online publication *Aljazeera* reported.

The following day, three relatives of miners and two others, armed with wooden sticks, smashed the windows of the company offices. They and five others then broke into the mine compound and staged a sit-down protest. The demonstration prompted the provincial vice governor to come out to the mine to give statements to family members and the press.



Reuters/Aly Song

Cops restrain relative of miner trapped in flooded Huayuan mine, August 19.

“Why does the whole world know what is going on, but we people right here don’t?” asked Zhang Chauntong, one of the protesters.

The company has reportedly told family members not to talk to the media. A wife of a missing miner, who asked not to be identified, told CNN that two company officials came to her apartment. They told her family “not to go out and not to talk to other people. . . . They did not give us any explanation. They just told us to stay at home,” she said.

More than 2,000 miners were killed on the job in China in the first seven months of this year—an average of 10 per day.

Immigrant rights actions protest deportation of Arellano

Continued from front page

September 12, when that body reconvenes. “We always knew it was a possibility that she would be arrested,” said Walter Coleman, the pastor at Adalberto United Methodist church.

Arellano’s eight-year-old son, Saúl, was a featured guest at a march of more than 1,000 people through downtown Los Angeles August 18. That action called for legalization of undocumented immigrants and an end to the raids and deportations.

Participants included religious figures; members of the Emergency Rapid Response Network, a coalition that opposes immigration raids; members and officials of Service Employees International Union Local 1877; students from the University of California, Los Angeles; and activists from Bienestar, a Latino HIV and Aids advocacy organization.

Bienestar had previously scheduled a vigil at the federal building for the same time. They are protesting the death of Victoria Arellano, no relation to Elvira Arellano, in ICE custody. Victoria Arellano was HIV positive when arrested by ICE. After being denied treatment in the ICE detention center, she developed pneumonia and died. Bienestar agreed to join the protest for Elvira Arellano and reschedule theirs for one week later. Coral López, a member of Bienestar, said that when she passed the ICE detention center on her way to the rally, prisoners who saw her sign chanted, “*estamos contigo*” [we are with you].

Angelica Salas, the executive director of CHIRLA, said there were going to be protests and vigils for Elvira Arellano across the country. She stated, “There will be actions in Oregon, Florida, New York, Tennessee, Wisconsin over the next few days. There continue to be protests at the church in Chicago where she had sanctuary.” In Los Angeles, there will be a protest march downtown Saturday, August 25, at noon from Olympic and Broadway to City Hall.

In Tijuana, Arellano said she plans to continue the struggle from Mexico. “This is a very important time for the people to stand up and continue fighting for what they want, which is legalization for their families,” she told the Los Angeles daily *La Opinión*. “I don’t feel defeated. I have won a lot, because I decided to fight from the moment I was arrested in 2002. I didn’t stay silent because I am part of this great fight for legalization.”



Militant/Eric Simpson

More than 1,000 marched in Los Angeles August 18 for legalization of immigrants and against police raids. Elvira Arellano was deported the next day. Sign above reads: “United day laborers of Baldwin Park. We want work! We are not criminals. Yes to immigration reform.”

Utah miners

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proved by MSHA,” referring to the June 15 permit the company obtained to authorize retreat mining in the area where the collapse occurred.

Events in solidarity with the families of the miners continue in Carbon and Emery counties. Raffles, car washes, and other fund-raisers have raised tens of thousands of dollars to help the miners’ families.

Frank Forrestal contributed to this article.